



The Croydon Chronicle

Spring/Summer 2018

JOIN US FOR OUR 16TH ANNUAL

**FREE
EVENT**

Spring Festival and Native Plant Sale

Saturday, April 28

10 a.m.-2 p.m.

*Bring the entire family and enjoy
the wonders of nature in an urban setting*

- Woodland Hikes
- Spring Native Plant Sale
- Nature Games and Crafts
- Live Animal Show
- Face Painting
- Sustainability Exhibits

Croydon Creek Nature Center

852 Avery Road, Rockville, MD 20851

Phone

240-314-8770

Web address

www.rockvillemd.gov/croydoncreek

Email

ccnc@rockvillemd.gov

Hours of Operation

Tuesday-Saturday,

9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Sunday, 1-5 p.m.

Closed Mondays

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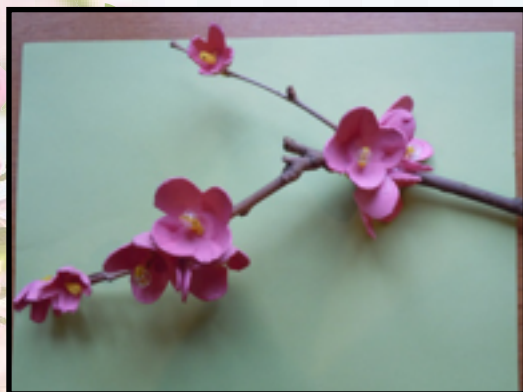
Kids Corner: Egg Carton Cherry Blossoms

You will need:

Cardboard egg carton
Pink paint
5 yellow pipe cleaners
12 yellow or clear pony beads
Scissors
Hot glue gun
Toothpick
Two-pronged tree branch

Directions:

1. Remove the top from the egg carton. There are five small knobs sticking up in between the egg cups; cut those off to use as smaller blooms. Then cut apart the 12 egg cups.
2. From the small knobs, cut triangles in each of the four sides to give the knobs "petals."
3. Trim the edge of each cup and cut four slits in a cross pattern down the sides of each cup. Cut rounded edges in between each of those four slits to form "petals."
4. Paint all of the egg cups and small knobs with pink paint. Allow them to dry completely.
5. When dry, poke a hole in the center of each cup and small knob using a toothpick.
6. Take 4 of the pipe cleaners and cut them into thirds. Thread a pony bead onto the end of each resulting segment. Push the bead down by about an inch and fold the excess pipe cleaner over the bead, then twist to secure it to the length below.
7. Poke the open end of the pipe cleaner into the hole of a cup and push it through until the bead touches the center of the cup.
8. Repeat steps 6-7 for the other 11 egg cups.
9. Take the fifth pipe cleaner and cut it into five equal pieces. Take one segment and bend it about 1/2 inch from the end so it touches itself. Poke the open end of the pipe cleaner into the hole in one of the knobs. Repeat for the other four small knobs.
10. Wrap the long end of each pipe cleaner around the branch to attach the "flowers." Group the larger flowers in clusters of three, and place the smaller flowers near the tips of the branch. If necessary, secure each flower with a dab of hot glue.



Seasonal Pools

Spring begins a new growth season for both plants and animals; new plants emerge and animals mate and reproduce. The days in spring start to get longer and the weather transitions to a warmer, more volatile state. It's the start of the rainy season.

When the ice-hardened soil melts along with the snow cover and rainfall increases, seasonal pools are formed. Some pools last for weeks and some for months, while others are only puddles lasting a few days.

Seasonal pools, also called vernal or spring pools, as well as ephemeral or short-lived pools, are temporary pools of water that form mainly during the rainy season. There are many ways to define and classify seasonal pools. The definitions are as varied as the occurrences of these seasonal pools worldwide. However, for our purposes, according to the state of Maryland, a seasonal pool is a "non-tidal wetland in a confined depression that has surface water for at least two consecutive months during the growing season."

This pool must also be free of adult fish populations, provide a habitat for amphibians and lack abundant herbaceous vegetation, according to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Seasonal pools are critical ecosystems, as they provide much-needed safe havens for amphibians and invertebrate species to reproduce and develop without fish as predators.

Many types of amphibians and crustaceans have evolved to breed and live specifically in seasonal pools that are dry most of the year. These animals are called indicator species, species that exist when a pool is defined as a seasonal pool.



In our area, there are three main species that are the indicators of a healthy seasonal pool. They are the spotted salamander (*Ambystoma maculatum*), the wood frog (*Lithobates sylvaticus*) and the fairy shrimp (Order Anostraca).

The spotted salamander is a creature of habit and will travel great distances to return to an ancestral seasonal pool for breeding. On the other end of the spectrum, the wood frog is a prolific breeder that will breed in any seasonal pool. The fairy shrimp, is a crustacean that is usually smaller than a half inch. Its eggs can survive drought for several years and will hatch about 30 hours after rain fills the seasonal pool in which they live.

Seasonal pools do not exist for indicator species alone. They are vibrant areas of diverse life. Many different animals, including insects, reptiles, birds, mammals and other amphibians, depend upon seasonal pools for food, water and/or a place to rest. When given the chance, many of these animals will also breed in seasonal pools, however they do not need these pools in order to exist.

In our area, waterfowl such as mallard ducks (*Anas platyrhynchos*) can commonly be seen resting on seasonal pools. White-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) will use a seasonal pool as a place to rest and drink. Many different types of insects such as predaceous diving beetles (Family Dytiscidae) and the common water strider (*Gerris lacustris*) will use seasonal pools as

breeding and feeding places. A variety of snakes and turtles including painted turtles (*Chrysemys picta*) and eastern rat snakes (*Pantherophis alleghaniensis*) can typically be found resting, drinking and eating by seasonal pools. And spring peepers (*Pseudacris crucifer*), gray tree frogs (*Hyla versicolor*) and American toads (*Anaxyrus americanus*) are amphibians that use seasonal pools to breed and feed. These are just a few examples of local species that depend upon seasonal pools.

Locally, as well as worldwide, amphibian populations are on the decline. Some of the possible reasons for this decline include a loss of their general habitat due to urbanization, pollution and deforestation. The seasonal pools and their existence are also threatened by these same causes.

Seasonal pools are not necessarily visible three seasons of the year. This makes them more vulnerable to human disturbance. It is difficult to detect the impact that their destruction has on the environment, as well as specific animal species, and it is also challenging to mitigate those effects.

We need to acquaint ourselves with these unique ecosystems and learn how to protect them. So, take a hike in the Hayes Forest Preserve this spring and into the early summer to visit our seasonal pools. You can find them in the low-lying forested areas of the preserve. Look for tadpoles, amphibian eggs or even a turtle in the pools or catch a whiff of one of our favorite spring plants, skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*) while you are there.

And always remember: Don't step in that puddle; you don't know who might be living there!

Spring/Summer Programs

Croydon Creek Campfire (Adult/Child)

Gather around the campfire with your friends for stories, snacks and more. An adult must accompany children and all participants must register.

Songs of the Season

Birds chirp, frogs croak, insects buzz. Spring brings nature and its noises back to life. Learn about what these noises mean and participate in a nature chorus.

Age: 3+

4764 Sa 5/12 5-6 PM \$5/\$6

Little Acorns

Explore nature with your little ones through a variety of play-based activities. Time will be spent outdoors; weather permitting. Adult participation required. Spaces are limited. Advanced registration recommended.

Age: 18-3 mos

Little Botanists

4759 Sa 5/5 10-11 AM \$7/\$9

Birds of a Feather

4760 Th 5/17 10-11 AM \$7/\$9

A Bug's Life

4761 Sa 6/2 10-11 AM \$7/\$9

Habitats Everywhere

4762 Th 6/14 10-11 AM \$7/\$9



Nature Tots (Adult/Child)

Discover the wonders of nature with your child. Each session, a naturalist helps you delve into a different nature topic through nature play, crafts, stories and hikes. Dress for the weather. Adult participation required. Spaces are limited.

Age: 2-5

Discovering Life Cycles

4755 Sa 5/19 10-11:30 AM \$8/\$10

World of Wings

4756 Sa 6/16 10-11:30 AM \$8/\$10

Outdoor Science Club

Young scientists investigate a variety of science topics through hands-on activities and time spent exploring the forest preserve.

Ages 6-8.

Wildflowers

4766 Su 5/20 1:30-3 PM \$8/\$10

Meadow Exploration

4767 Su 6/17 1:30-3 PM \$8/\$10



CLEAN-UP EVENT

Hayes Forest Preserve

Invasive Species Pull

Sunday, May 6, 1:30-4:30 p.m.

- Time working at events is eligible for Student Service Learning hours.
- Students 14 years and younger must be accompanied by an adult.
- Gloves and bags are provided.

At Croydon Creek Nature Center

852 Avery Road
No registration required
240-314-8770



Spring/Summer Programs



Creek Crawl

How many different animals live in Croydon Creek? Find out as we spend an afternoon in our aquatic habitat searching and identifying local critters. Wear closed-toe shoes and bring a towel. Children younger than 7 must be accompanied by an adult.

Age: 3+
5260 Sa 8/11 10-11:30 AM \$5/\$6

Eyes to the Sky! Astronomy for Adults

Adults, prepare to learn about the night sky from local astronomers! Find out about common constellations and gaze through telescopes to see distant planets. Learn how to read a sky map and explore astronomy apps for your phone. Enjoy light snacks and a campfire. This program is dependent on good weather and clear skies.

Age: 16+
4781 Sa 6/9 9-10 PM \$10/\$12



Saturday, May 19 • 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

The National Parks Trust and the City of Rockville Recreation and Parks Department invite everyone to visit Croydon Creek Nature Center to celebrate

KIDS TO PARKS DAY

Spend time outdoors. Enjoy the Hayes Forest Preserve.

240-314-8770

Little Acorns

Explore nature with your little ones through a variety of play-based activities. Time will be spent outdoors, weather permitting. Adult participation required. Spaces are limited. Advanced registration recommended.

Age: 18-3 mos

A Bug's Life

4761 Sa 6/2 10-11 AM \$7/\$9

Habitats Everywhere

4762 Th 6/14 10-11 AM \$7/\$9

Polliwog Adventures (Adult/Child)

Each week explore a new topic in natural history. Through stories, short hikes, games and activities, little ones will learn about nature in a hands-on environment. Adult participation required. Spaces are limited.

Ages: 2-5 yrs

Secrets in the Soil

5236 Th 7/5 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

Songbirds Sing

5237 Th 7/12 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

Animal Builders

5241 Th 7/19 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

Scales and Slime

5243 Th 8/2 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

Water Wonders

5244 Th 8/9 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

Backyard Jungle

5245 Th 8/16 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

Furry Friends

5247 Th 8/23 10-11 AM \$7/\$8

The Buzz about Honeybees

Did you know that a worker bee makes only 1/12 of a teaspoon of honey in it's lifetime? Discover more fascinating facts about honeybees with our volunteer beekeeper. Sample different types of honey, extract honey from the comb and get all your burning honeybee questions answered! All participants must register. Children under 10 must be accompanied by a registered adult.

Age: 5+
5355 Sa 7/28 1:30-3 PM \$5/\$6

Tree ID Family Hike

Join us for a stroll around the Hayes Forest Preserve and learn about the trees that call our forest home. Learn tips for tree identification and how certain trees are used by both humans and animals.

Age: 3+
4782 Su 6/3 2-3 PM \$3/\$4

Summer Camp Programs



Art in the Park

Using various art methods and media, campers explore the Civic Center Park to find inspiration and create works of art inspired by nature. Dress for a mess. Be prepared to have fun and get creative!

Age: 7-9

9 AM-3 PM

4103 7/30-8/3 \$225/\$255

EcoInvestigators Camp

Curious about creatures? Fascinated by forests? Crazy about creeks? This camp is for you! Spend your days investigating local habitats through a variety of activities, field studies and projects. Time is spent outdoors. Camp may include an off-site field trip.

Age: 7-10

9 AM-3 PM

4097 6/25-6/29 \$225/\$255

4098 7/23-7/27 \$225/\$255

NEW! Exploration & Service Camp

Spend the last few days of summer exploring our area and earning Student Service Learning (SSL) hours. Participants spend two days of camp adventuring on field trips that put them in the treetops and flying through the air. The other two days of camp are spent participating in volunteer projects. Each person receives 12 SSL hours total.

Age: 11-14

9 AM-4 PM

4147 8/27-8/30 \$275/\$325

Nature Play Camp

Make the most of the first few days of summer break by spending it outdoors at Croydon Creek. Each day provides participants with opportunities to connect with nature through naturalist-led activities, as well as unstructured, open-ended discovery and creative play.

Age: 7-10

9 AM-3 PM

4101 6/18-6/22 \$225/\$255

Advanced Survivor Camp

This course takes nature exploration to a whole new level. Campers use increasingly complicated scenarios such as being lost, accidents in remote places, dealing with natural disasters (including the zombie apocalypse) to develop real survival, disaster response and primitive skills. Taught by an experienced survival and primitive skills practitioner, this camp emphasizes teamwork and leadership.

Age: 8-10

9 AM-4 PM

4100 8/13-8/17 \$325/\$385

Age: 10-14

9 AM-4 PM

4091 8/20-8/24 \$325/\$385

Guppy Nature Camp

Interested in animals that creep, crawl and flap? Meet the critters that call Croydon Creek home and explore the exciting natural world. Hands-on activities, experiments, hikes and crafts are all in a day's fun.

Age: 5-7

9 AM-3 PM

4092 6/25-6/29 \$205/\$245

4093 7/23-7/27 \$205/\$245

4094 8/6-8/10 \$205/\$245

9 AM-12 PM

4095 7/9-7/13 \$105/\$125

Nature Service Learning Camp

Have fun at Croydon Creek while earning Student Service Learning (SSL) hours. Participants investigate local environmental issues each morning. In the afternoon they complete an eco-friendly volunteer project. Each person receives 20 SSL hours total.

Age: 11-14

9 AM-3 PM

4096 7/16-7/20 \$230/\$260

Croydon Creek Camp Open House

Saturday, June 2
11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Is your child registered for a summer camp at Croydon Creek Nature Center? Are you interested in learning more about our summer camp offerings? Stop by and drop off summer camp forms, meet the staff, get the answers to your camp questions and roast a marshmallow by the campfire!

Like us on Facebook



Croydon Creek
Nature Center

Price key:

**Resident Discount/
Non Resident Rate**

To register visit

www.rockvillemd.gov/recreation